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## CRITICAL NOTICES.

**Eduard König's "Introduction to the Old Testament."***(Collection of Theological Manuals. Part II., 1st Section.**Bonn, 1893.)*

THE above-named work has been added to the various manuals containing introductions to the Old Testament. The reasons which induced the author to work up afresh the materials contained in the many excellent treatises which have appeared until now are briefly stated in the Preface. The author's intention is to give the "casting vote" to the evidence afforded by the History of Language "in determining the problems connected with the History of Literature in the Old Testament." The author says further that "he had to offer the results of recent investigations with regard to many points in connection with the History of the Text, the Canon, and the Rules for the Exegesis of the Old Testament."

As a matter of fact, the chief stress has been placed upon these latter points, which have been treated in much more detail than in those works which have hitherto appeared upon the subject. It can only be determined after mature investigation, a task which would require much time, how far our author has succeeded in finding a solution for the problems connected with the History of Biblical Literature by bringing to bear upon these problems new observations with regard to the historical development of the Hebrew language within the range of the Old Testament. We shall, therefore, pass over this portion of the book. We shall also omit to notice those parts in which the author does not promise anything new upon the question, and simply confine ourselves to those divisions which treat of the "Sources and Adventures of the Text," "the History of the Collection and the Canon of the Old Testament, and the History of the rules and methods of Exegesis."

We are pleased to be able to state that the author has treated the History of the Text as well as that of the Exegesis of the Old Testament upon a much broader basis than has been the case in former Introductions. He has, in a comprehensive and scholarly manner, laid under contribution the literature of the 17th and 18th centuries devoted to the subject, and with exemplary industry made himself

acquainted with the later Jewish literature. We can easily convince ourselves of the results of such labours, on comparing the striking portions of the Introduction under review with the corresponding portions of preceding works. But, as it generally happens with attempts in a new field, misconceptions and errors are not wanting, even in this instance. A mistake may be easily made when travelling along untrodden paths, and it is no reproach to an author to say that he has not always hit on the right thing. In order, therefore, to anticipate the danger which might threaten such as are little acquainted with this branch, and likely to be misled by relying on the reputation of the author, I herewith submit the following corrections:—

On p. 18 the author quotes from the *Mischna Shabbath*, IX. 6, לְנוֹן. This form, which is apparently a noun, does not occur at all. There occurs in the *Editio princeps* of Surenhusius' edition of the Mishna and in all the editions of which I have availed myself, שְׂמַצְנִיעִין אוֹתוֹן לְנוֹן. The Waw is *mater lectionis* for a short kametz. In the same part we find תַּלְמִיד חֶכֶם, translated "a wise Talmudist," instead of "a scholar." On p. 20 there is the question concerning וועלש כתב and תם כתב. The first expression is correctly brought by Hävernicks in connection with כְּתִיבָה תָּמָה (*Shabbath*, 103b; cf. *Sifre*, II. 36). König rejects this explanation and says, "As regards determining the age of scrolls written in Tam-character, the character would simply offer a *terminus a quo*, if we say that this style of writing received its form from a grandson of Rashi, named Tam, viz., in the 12th century, which would seem more natural in the case of Tam-Tephillin and Rashe-Ksaf (Tychsen, *Tent.*, 267), than, e.g., to assume, with Hävernicks, § 50, that Tam-Ksaf is derived from כְּתִיבָה תָּמָה (*Shabbath*, 103b) i.e., faultless style of writing." Such a statement dare not be repeated. Tam Tephillin (correctly Tephillin of Rabbi Jacob = Tam, according to Gen. xxv. 27) has no reference to the art of writing, but to the contents of the capsules (phylacteries), in which point R. Jacob differed from his grandfather; but here is not the place to discuss the point. Rashi-kethab is the name, at the present day, of the character in which the commentaries are printed in the Bible editions. I am unable to assert how old this expression may be.

On p. 29 we read, in inverted commas, thus:— "A book which is not corrected (מוֹנָה), R. Ame adds, within thirty days, may be (כְּנוּקָר) destroyed" (*Kethuboth*, 19b). In the passage referred to we read:— אַתְּמַר סֵפֶר שֶׁאִינוּ מוֹנָה אָמַר רַבִּי אָמִי עַד שְׁלִשִׁים יוֹם מוֹתֵר לְשִׁהוּתוֹ מִכָּאן וְאֵילָךְ אֶסּוּר לְשִׁהוּתוֹ שְׁנֵאמַר אַל תִּשְׁכַּן בְּאַהֲלֵיךְ עוֹלָה, which means that one may keep a book uncorrected for thirty days (according to Job xi. 14), after which time it has to be corrected. König read instead

of לשחיתו, לשחיתו, which could not have happened had he read the continuation of the verse quoted.

*Ib.*, line 2:—"The Scroll of the Law 'dare not be placed on its face, *i.e.*, so that the beginning lies underneath,'" etc. The reference is to *Sopherim*, III. 14 (no source is given), and should be translated: "The Scroll of the Law dare not be placed upon the written side" (cf. *Erubin*, 98a).

Page 30 deals with the various versions of the account concerning the three Scrolls of the Law found in the Temple court. In treating (p. 35, n. 2) of the oldest source, our author should not have omitted *Sifre* II. 3, 5, 6. Furthermore, we must bear in mind that the account in *Sopherim* 6, 4, cannot possibly be the most ancient, for the simple reason that it is adduced in the name of Simon ben Lakish, an Amora living in the third century, and is consequently later than the account given in *Sifre* and the Jerusalem Talmud (*Taanith*, 68a), in which it is given anonymously as a Baraitha. From internal evidence also the text in *Sopherim* appears a derivative one, for a copy can surely not be called "Book with ה"א," if the ה"א does not once appear in the Kethib of the same. This would certainly be, according to Prof. König's conception, a *lucus a non lucendo*. The missing eleventh ה"א in *Aboth de R. Nathan*, c. 34, which is left out by Müller, Schechter (in his edition, 1887) and König, might be contained in the verse quoted from Genesis xx. 5, if we presuppose that not alone וְה"א but also the expression immediately preceding, אֲהוּרֵי הוּא, has, contrary to the Massora, to be written with Yod.

On p. 31 we find לְנִנְאִי instead of לְנִנְאִי. The word is derived from the Aramaic, and there is no reason for punctuating it otherwise than as Aramaic, which, by the way, corresponds to the traditional pronunciation.

On pp. 32, 33, the author tacitly assumes my explanation of the dot over the Yod in וְבִינִיךְ (Gen. xvi. 5) [*Masoretische Untersuchungen*, pp. 17, etc.]. I cannot understand why in place of the classical passage in *Sifre* (on Numbers ix. 10) the derivative later source, *Numeri Rabba* (on III. 39) is quoted. Regarding the controversy (*ib.* Note), I will only state that I did say in my work, p. 7, that the dots called for a settlement, but not that the reading proposed through them was the "only correct one." It follows beyond doubt from the explanation concerning these dots in *Sifre* and other passages, that (as I have proved) in place of the elements of the text which were dotted, others had to be put. Why, König himself assumes this. But this does not imply that the text proposed, which perchance rested upon some MS. as a basis, was the better one, or had more evidence in its favour. Were this the case, it would undoubtedly have been admitted into

the text, and the reading which we have now in the text would have been marked by dots. The objection that no other reading is expressly proposed has no force, if we consider that the dots point back to the time in which no marginal notes were thought of. In support of this assertion, we may instance what has already been said concerning כמען (Deut. xxxiii. 27), where the better reading was simply admitted into the text without attention being called, by means of a marginal note, to the other reading. König might just as well have offered the objection against his own view, inasmuch as he assumes that, by means of the dots, another reading is suggested. Why is the other reading not noted in the margin?

Page 35 (§ 11) deals with "the old Jewish practical labours with regard to the text of the Old Testament which are not mentioned in the Talmud." The author's intention is to bring forward such data bearing upon the history of the text as were not yet known in Talmudic times; and yet he adduces in the first instance the "Eminations of the Sopherim," of which eleven already appear in the *Mechilta*. This is the more surprising as our author himself mentions the *Mechilta*. One error occasions another, for, from the circumstance that the *Tiqqûn Sopherim* are not mentioned in the Talmud, he draws a chronological deduction. He remarks, namely, on p. 41:—"It is unsafe to refer the *Tiqqûn Sopherim* back to Ezra (§ 11, etc.), if only on account of the consideration that this questionable correction was not mentioned in the Talmud."

Page 36. סבירין does not mean "to propose a marginal reading," at least it is not the sense in which those instances have to be taken which occur in large number in our present Massora. The said expression denotes, "one might think," "one might wrongly opine." Originally סבירין might perhaps have had something of a polemical character, designed against the current reading (Geiger), but the greater part of those instances occurring in the present Massora are simply intended to prevent a possible error. Our author's statement is peculiar, when he says:—"The view of Capellus (3, 15, 19), that Qarjan and Sebirin simply imply the difference between older and later proposals, does not receive strong confirmation, but he might have brought forward in their favour that the name of the first generation of the post-Talmudic doctors was Saboreans, *i.e.*, authors of a mere סברה 'opinion.'" What is meant to be proved by this reference? That סבר=to opine? Or is König of opinion that the Saboreans were already styled thus by their contemporaries? Or are the Saboreans the authors of the סבירין? (Cf. also pp. 48 and 131.)

Page 40. "Jerome has, it is true, described the dotting in Gen. xix. 33 as one clearly shown in the text ('Adpungunt de super, etc.')., while, in reality, he adopts some of the Qeres by preference."

The dots are perhaps 500 years earlier than Jerome, as is proved by the sources themselves. It will, therefore, not do to mislead the reader by means of such quotations as to the age of these dots.

On p. 47, line 16, read (instead of רומי (רומי) = Rome.

Of p. 84, n. 1, it should be observed that I have not contested the hanging Nun in מנשה (Judges xviii. 30), since I stated clearly (*Massoretische Untersuchungen*, 49), that it probably arose about 300. I only made the remark, which is of secondary importance, that "that no mention is made," in *Baba Bathra*, "that the Nun is a hanging one."

It is to be regretted that our author, who admits the results of my investigations, in spite of his objections against subordinate points, which, however, need scarcely be taken into account, yet again elects to throw a dangerous obscurity about the proper understanding of the Talmudic-Massoretic quotations by means of such expressions as the following (p. 84):—"The declaration of the Talmud on Judges xviii. 30 is a support of the opinion that also other peculiarities in the traditional Hebrew Old Testament were introduced, in order that meanings might be attached to them, *e.g.*, in the case of the broken Waw in שלום, which might hint at the idea that the peace of God made with Phineas, the son of Eliezer, has suffered a break, etc." No, this was not the case. The Doctors of the Talmud neither added to nor altered the sacred text by one iota for the sake of making it a peg on which to hang some lesson; they might as well have altered every letter, for some meaning attaches itself to every tittle. All that can be established is this: that, whenever anything abnormal existed in the text, some meaning was given to it, or that through an explanation based upon a misconception, an alteration of the text crept in; but never did it occur in the historical period of the history of the Text that an opportunity was taken to alter the text with the object of making it serve mnemonic purposes. It is time that such an antiquated view be dismissed once and for all.

According to this explanation we shall also have to reject the statement made on page 87, to the effect that "there is some basis for the opinion that the abnormal appearances in the M. T. were, at least partially, brought out for the express purpose of hinting at theories." Not a single passage can be adduced from Jewish Traditional Literature in support of such an opinion.

On p. 90 there is an endeavour to prove "that even in the editing of the Talmud there was not the most scrupulous care exercised as regards quotations . . . . For, as an instance, corresponding to לא תשוב (Deut. xxiv. 19), we have בל תשוב, *Mishna Pea*, 6, 4. There can be no doubt that the לא was changed into the בל which in

the Old Testament has the character rather of the dialectic and later Hebrew."

There can be no doubt that the לָא and בִּל did not interchange, for both Mishna and Talmud quote the prohibitions mostly with בִּל and not with לָא. For this kind of interchange one could instance hundreds of examples (*e.g.*, בִּל חֲסִיף בִּל תִּגְרַע, Deut. iv. 2, in *Rosh Hashana*, 28*b*; בִּבְכֹל יִרְאָה וּבְכֹל יִמְצָא, Exod. xii. 19; xiii. 7 in *Mishna Pesachim*, iii. 3, and ix. 3, etc.). In such and similar examples, it is not a passage from the Text that is quoted, but the command itself that is quoted, and this escaped the notice of Kōnig.

Notice to p. 98, n. 1, that the הִשָּׁם of the Samaritans is a periphrasis of the Tetragrammaton.

On p. 106, n. 4, the following passage (*Megilla*, 9*a*), וְכֵנָם אֶצֶל כָּל אֶחָד ואחר (King Ptolemy) went unto each individual (scholar), is translated thus: "And each one was collected apart." How can an individual be collected? The author confounded וְכֵנָם with כֵּנָם.

On p. 108, וְקִילְסוּ אוֹתוֹ (J. *Megilla*, i. 11 [71*c*, l. 12]), which means "they praised him" (the translator, Aquila), is translated, "And they considered him beautiful." Really one should not allow himself to be deceived by such questionable etymology (קִלְס and καλως).

We shall refrain from further observations touching individual statements contained in this first sub-division, as these will be treated elsewhere; and we pass over to the third and fourth sub-divisions which are devoted to the History of the Collection and Canon of the Old Testament and History of its Exegesis.

Page 446. The Baraitha *Baba Bathra*, 14*b*, concerning the order and editing of the several books of the Old Testament is put three centuries too late. Some Baraithas only received their final form in the first half of the third century, *i.e.*, after that time no more of them were composed; but it cannot on that account be said that every Baraitha originates from the same period. By far the greater portion of these traditions may be traced at least one century further back, and specially the one Baraitha referred to bears the impress of its age on the face of it, because, in the first place, no author is mentioned therein; and secondly there is no mention of any controversy, both of which circumstances point infallibly to an earlier period. On the same page we meet with the peculiar statement, that the first mention that is made of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah having belonged to the Great Synagogue is to be found in the passage of the *Dikd. Hat.*, 57, referring to Moses ben Asher (c. 900). Why, the Talmud already presupposes the fact that they did belong to it. Compare the passages of the Talmud which Fürst has collected in his *Kanon des A.T.*, p. 47, n. 8.

Page 447, n. 2. This is not clear to me.

We need not criticise what our author on pp. 452-3 has to say with reference to the idea contained in גנן, inasmuch as it would carry us too far. We would but remark that שהיו דבריו כותרים זה את זה (*Shabbath*. 30*b*) cannot be rendered, "because his words *obscured* one the other." It is correctly given in parenthesis as "contradict." The literal meaning of כתר here is "pulling down," and not "obscuring."

Page 457. "Or when Solomon is called a prophet in the Æthiopic Church." Why does our author not mention the Talmud also, considering that he cites *Sota*, 48*b*, and translates this passage (447, n. 2)?

Pages 458 and 144. In the latter passage we read: "Perhaps we should not overlook this point, that Christ many a time omits all mention of the name of Moses in those cases in which he refers to the Laws of the Pentateuch. Cf. the passive 'It is said' with the active, 'But I say unto you' (Matt. v. 21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43). It can consequently not be insisted upon that the sayings of Christ were bound to be reproductions with literary historical accuracy." How incorrect this whole method of proving things is may be realised when we call to mind that, in Jewish tradition, the passages of the text are usually quoted with the expression שנאמר—"it is said." This minor point proves once again that, in questions of this sort, it is unsafe to take a single step without an exact knowledge of Jewish literature.

Page 466. "Zunz, 7, cites *Sabbath*, 116*b*. There it states, "In [Bab.] Nehardea they took as the Perikope a section of the Kethubim at the meat-offering of the Sabbath." What offerings were brought in Bab. Nehardea in the third century? The meat-offering has been derived from the slavish rendering of the two words במנחתא דשבתא =at the *Afternoon Service* of the Sabbath.

Page 477, line 15 from below. It should have been stated that it ought to have read, ויברך את טוביה ואת אשתו.

Page 514. To be brief, הלכה comes from the Aramaic; משפט (judgment), being translated by הלכתא (*e.g.*, Ex. xxi. 7; xxvi. 30). Schürer, 2, 270, hits upon the right rendering when he says 'was gang und gabe ist.' Etymologically הלכה is identical with מנהג. (Cf. *J. Shebiith*, iv. 1; 35*a*, line 24), as מנהג is also used for מהלך (cf. *Mech.* xix. 4=62*b*, line 15, ed. Friedmann).

הגדרה is originally, as Dr. Bacher has shown, nothing else than exegesis. König quotes Bacher's article, *JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, 1892, but, strange to say, does not refer to this conclusion, and keeps to the erroneous translation "Verkündigen."

The inexperienced reader might easily contract wrong ideas from the following remarks regarding the inference *a majori ad minorem*



and a *minori ad majorem*: "I myself have found examples in *Jerus. Sanhedrin*, xii. 7, and in Rashi to *Exod. xxii. 31* (p. 515)." The question turns upon an inference which occurs numberless times in the Talmuds and Midrashim; how then can we refer to Rashi? By the way, I cannot make out to what passage in Rashi reference is made, since *Exod. xxii.* has but 30 verses.

Page 516. The example for בנין אב is incorrect. The source is not added; one is referred to Wähner (380, 402, 483), which, however, is inaccessible to me at present; but *Bechoroth 7a* is meant. Upon closer investigation and comparison with *Sifra to 11, 2* (ed. Weiss, 48a), we easily find that the passage of the Talmud under discussion has been misinterpreted, for it is not right to say that שנה can only be one of the smaller cattle, the offspring of either two sheep or two goats.

"These seven rules which the well-known Hillel the Elder investigated (*Pirqê Aboth de R. Nathan* 35 aβ), formed the foundation of the thirteen rules of Ishmael. To these were added 'the Rules of the Sages of the Gemara,' and the 'thirty-two Rules of R. Jose, the Galilean,' according to which the Haggada is investigated."

What is meant by the "Rules of the Sages of the Gemara," I really do not understand. We only know of the seven Rules of Hillel, the thirteen of Ishmael, and the thirty-two of Elieser ben Jose, the Galilean; others are not known.

*Id.* and p. 102. Concerning the use of letters for numerals (=Gematria) in Onkelos, the author cites (102) Numbers xii. 1, where האשה הכשית is rendered by שפירתה. Now Prof. König thinks that this rendering is only intelligible by reason of Rashi's remark כושית בגמטריא יפת מראה. This is undoubtedly incorrect, for the Targum, as far as I know, has not rendered one single passage upon the strength of a Gematria. The rendering in question springs from the explanation given in the *Sifre* i. 6 (Friedmann, 27a); מה כושי משונה כן צפורה משונה בנויה יותר מכל הנשים = Just as the Ethiopian differs in (the colour of) his skin, so was Zipporah different by virtue of her beauty from all other women. Cf. also 525, n. 2.

We should have liked more preciseness in settling the time of the composition of the Mishna. König states generally, "c. 180 A.D." (*e.g.*, 514); while on p. 522, *Mishna* c. 200"; and 516, "*Doctors of the Mishna*, 30 B.C.—200 A.D." One and the same writer dare not admit now the date given by one scholar, now that given by another. I consider 220 to be the probable date of its redaction, but within the narrow limits of this notice it is impossible to enter into details. It is beyond doubt incorrect to place the date of the redaction of the Tosephta at "c. 400" (although this date has found its adherents), as it appears on p. 522 in the following statement which, in other

respects, is also erroneous: "The Palestinian Gemara (Completion, c. 350), and the Babylonian Gemara (c. 450), as also the additional [additional to what?] collected Tosephta (Addendum, c. 400)."

We should no longer use the term "Gemara," for the ancients knew only of the expression "Talmud"; besides, the translation "Completion" is incorrect, for גמרא (from which the word גמרה is formed) also signifies in the Talmud "to learn," specially "to learn by heart," so that Gemara secondarily=Talmud.

We have to observe further, that it would be much nearer the mark to give c. 400 for the Jer. Talmud, and c. 500—550 for the Babylonian Talmud. This, too, is the place to remark upon the translation "investigations" for "Midrashim," which might lead to misconception, inasmuch as in the said works there are no "investigations." It is best to render the expression by "Commentaries," just as on the same page the author renders Mechilta "Sifre" and "Sifra," or "Agadic Commentaries," if one wishes to be particularly precise.

It is also incorrect to define the Pesikta as a Commentary, "giving reflections upon the Sabbath portions." In the first place it does not contain, as one would imagine from König's words, reflections upon all the Sabbath portions; and, secondly, it contains reflections also upon the Festival portions. (Cf. Zunz, *Gottesdien. Vorträge*, p. 190, etc., and Buber's Ed., 1868, III.)

The statement regarding the Midrash Rabba (*ib.*) is also very strange: "Somewhat later are the Rabboth, *i.e.*, the large Editions [with explanations] of the said Books, viz., the Pentateuch and the five Megilloth: Bereshith, Shemoth Rabba," etc. Such a description would be more appropriate for the large Rabbinic editing of the Bible מְקִרְאוֹת גְּדוּלוֹת, but not for the Midrash Rabba. The Rabboth are not large editions, with explanations, of the said Books, but agadic remarks upon them, of various lengths, and dating from different times.

The concluding words of the author of this work, which evidences so much scholarship and great industry, are devoted to the task of verifying passages from the Talmud. He says: "Many a time a 'sic' or '!' is added to passages cited from the Talmud, as a sign that the respective quotations have been verified in accordance with past and modern information." Prof. König thus attaches, and rightly so, great importance to the correct interpretation and precise rendering of the texts quoted; I, therefore, cherish the pleasant hope that my remarks, aiming as they do for the most part at the same object, will be welcome to the esteemed author.

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